Commodity	Monthly Average WPI for 2006					
	June	July	August	September	October	% Increase (October over June)
Rapeseed & Mustard	165.7	163.6	166.7	168.4	167.6	1.1
Wheat	200.0	201.1	207.4	216.7	221.1	10.6
Gram	187.8	189.4	196.7	215.7	235.7	25.5

The percentage increase in WPI of rapeseed & mustard is much lower than that of wheat and gram. However, for the 2006-07 marketing season the minimum support price (MSP) of rapessed & mustard is Rs. 1715/- per quintal compared to Rs. 750/- per quintal for wheat and Rs. 1445/- per quintal for gram.

(d) The States mainly contributing to the fall in area of cultivation of rapeseed & mustard as reported in the CWWG meeting held on 24th November 2006 are Uttar Pradesh (–2.21 lakh hectares), Madhya Pradesh (–2.08 lakh hectares) and Haryana (–0.89 lakh hectares).

The Government has been monitoring the prices of essential commodities closely on a regular basis. The Government announced the MSP of rapeseed & mustard, wheat and gram on 27th/30th October 2006 so that the farmer gets the price signal.

Making small holdings remunerative

†1042. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as a result of farmers having small holding in the country, agriculture has become totally unremunerative;

(b) whether it is also a fact that in the absence of necessary infrastructural facilities, the agriculture sector has not been able to develop properly;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the details thereof and the Government's viewpoint on it; and

(d) whether it is a fact that there is a need to form landholding companies in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) According to 59th Round (2002-03) of National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO), small and marginal farmers constituted 84 per cent of all farmer households. Results of the survey further show that agriculture was not profitable for 27 per cent of the total number of farmer households.

(b) and (c) The Planning Commission has reviewed the situation in the Mid-Term Appraisal of Tenth Five Year Plan, released in June 2005. It has observed that there was deceleration in the growth of agriculture due to inadequate investment, weak extension services in the States, inadequate seed production, distribution and regulation,failure to carry out essential reforms to conserve water and soil, inadequacies of rural infrastructure like road, transport, electricity, marketing infrastructure, storage facilities and other post-harvest facilities.

(d) At present, there is no statutory provision to form land holding companies in the country;

Futures trading

1043. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whehter it is a fact that the Kabra Committee suggested that the futures trading should be restricted only to 17 commodities;

(b) if so, the details of those commodities alongwith the rationale for that recommendation;

(c) whether it is also a fact that at present 80 commodities are being allowed for future/derivative trading;

(d) whether any Committee set up by Government recommended for strengthening of Forward Market Commission;

(e) if so, the steps taken by Government thereon; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?